

of our American servicemen and women through her compassionate speeches and leadership. Pat's enthusiasm and selfless service to those in the Denver community, and this nation, certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3550 "THE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS"

**HON. DON YOUNG**

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 20, 2003*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today, along with nearly every member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I and Congressman JIM OBERSTAR are introducing a truly historic highway and transit funding bill that will benefit every State in the Nation.

The introduction of this bipartisan legislation would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of Congressman OBERSTAR. In addition, the Chairman PETRI of the Subcommittee on Highways, Transit and Pipelines, along with the subcommittee ranking Democrat, Congressman LIPINSKI were instrumental in getting this legislation written for introduction.

The legislation provides \$375 billion over the next six years. This proposed level of funding is based upon the needs of our country as outlined in the U.S. Department of Transportation Condition and Performance report.

With this bill, we will have the resources to maintain our existing transportation infrastructure and begin to improve it as well. We can address our national congestion crisis and safety problems.

Our transportation infrastructure is old and getting worse. Thirty two percent of our major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and 28% of our bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

Congestion is affecting our quality of life and costing our nation \$67 billion a year—more than \$1,100 for the average commuter each year.

Commuters are sitting longer and longer in traffic jams and billions of gallons of fuel is wasted each year due to congestion.

Most importantly, this country is facing a transportation safety crisis. More than 42,000 people die each year on our roads and highways. Nearly one-third of all these fatal crashes are caused by substandard road conditions and roadside hazards. This is totally unacceptable for the most advanced nation in the world.

Over the next six years, we provide \$298 billion for highway, road and bridge improvements . . . and \$69 billion for transit programs.

This legislation proposes to increase the minimum guaranteed percentage for every State from 90.5 percent to 95 percent by 2009. We understand that more equity is needed for all 50 States.

The bill significantly increases funding for highway safety programs.

In addition, the bill authorizes \$17.6 billion for "Projects of National and Regional Significance"—a major boost for these important projects.

It also authorizes \$7.5 billion to address the problem of railroad-highway crossings and the elimination of road hazards.

Our legislation will also have another positive benefit by giving a major boost to our nation's economy. Nationally, this proposal creates more than 1.3 million new highway jobs over the next six years.

It is time to face the facts—our highways, bridges and transit systems are aging and not up to the standards which our citizens expect. We need to stimulate the economy and this important legislation will do just that. America's congestion and safety crisis will not go away—it must be addressed immediately.

Enactment of this landmark legislation is a legacy for all users of our transportation infrastructure, both today and for future generations and moves our aging transportation system into the 21st century.

IN SUPPORT OF THE LIFESPAN RESPITE CARE ACT OF 2003

**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 20, 2003*

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2003 and in celebration of the Nation's family caregivers during National Family Caregivers Month and Alzheimer's Awareness month. This week before Thanksgiving, as we anticipate gathering with family, friends and loved ones, I am privileged to recognize and honor the millions of family caregivers who care for family members with disabling or chronic conditions such as those afflicted by Alzheimer's disease. There is no doubt in my mind that caregivers—those who devote themselves selflessly to caring for loved ones with disease such as Alzheimer's—are the true heroes. I know because my dear mother was a victim of Alzheimer's and my father was a hero caring for her to the day she died.

Today over 4.5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease. Almost half of all Americans over age 85 suffer from this devastating debilitation. With the graying of the baby boomer population a sharp increase in Alzheimer's disease is expected. Over 70 percent of people afflicted with Alzheimer's disease live at home, with 75 percent of home bound care provided by family and friends. There are over 25 million family caregivers in America and by 2020, the number of adults requiring assistance with daily living will increase to almost 40 million, placing a tremendous load on the family caregivers.

We cannot afford to lose any family caregivers to stress or illness. We as a nation cannot afford it because family caregivers provide \$250 billion per year in unpaid care. Yet, the lack of support is taking its toll on caregivers. While a large proportion of caregivers report finding an inner strength, significant numbers report serious physical or mental health problems, including headaches, stomach disorders, back pain, sleepless nights and depression. Mortality risks for caregivers are 63 percent higher than for noncaregivers.

In addition to serious health consequences, many families suffer emotionally and economically. Families of children with disabilities face a significantly higher divorce rate than families

of children without disabilities. Lack of respite care has even been found to interfere with the ability of parents of children with disabilities to accept job opportunities.

Without adequate family support, children with disabilities face a nearly 4 times higher risk of abuse and neglect than children without disabilities and the abuse rate of the elderly is unacceptably high.

Respite works. It allows families to remain together and avoid more costly out-of-home placements. Hospitalizations, institutionalization, nursing home and foster care placements have been shown to actually decline when respite or crisis care is the intervention.

This bill will help create a family caregiving respite policy in our country, not just a band-aid solution. Families are under greater stress today than ever before and the numbers who will assume caregiving roles is rising at an alarming rate. Respite works, respite saves money, respite save families. We cannot afford to ignore the family caregivers any longer. We must give them respite.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MATT MCCHESENEY

**HON. SCOTT MCINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 20, 2003*

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated law enforcement officer from my district. Deputy Matt McChesney is a caring and capable law enforcement professional who is committed to improving the lives of families impacted by domestic violence. I am proud to join my colleagues here today in recognizing Matt's tremendous service to the Colorado community before this body of Congress and our nation.

Matt often sacrifices sleep, and the few days he has off, to come into the District Attorney's office the morning after a domestic abuse arrest. There, he works tirelessly to ensure that each victim is treated with dignity and respect. In addition, Matt works with the Victim's Assistance Program and the Operations Division to educate and train volunteers on how to assist victims. For Matt's dedication and commitment to others, he was recently named Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. The people in Matt's district are safer as the result of his service and protection.

Mr. Speaker, Matt McChesney is a dedicated individual who sacrifices his time to helping those who are victim to the terrors of domestic violence. His compassion and selfless service to our state definitely deserve the recognition of this body of Congress and this nation. Thanks for your service Matt, and congratulations on a well-deserved award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 20, 2003*

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for four votes on Wednesday, November 19, 2003. Had I been present, I would have cast my votes as follows: